

Senior Community Service Employment Program

State Plan

Montana

2008-2011

Montana Senior Community Service Employment Program PY 2008 through 2011

Section 1. Purpose of the State Plan

The purpose of the State Senior Employment Services Coordination Plan is to improve coordination among organizations engaged in older worker activities that will result in employment for older workers. The Plan is intended as a guide to be used by the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) provider as it plans its service activities within the state.

This is more important than ever in Montana with the projected decline in the work force. In 2008 almost half of the Montana work force is over the age of 55. By 2020, employment among older workers begins to show yearly declines as baby boomers retire. According to Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Addressing the Coming Labor Shortage by Tyler Turner, "...older workers will play a large role in the state's labor force in the future. Increasing employment among this group will be a key component of any efforts to combat declining labor force participation." By 2025, Montana is projected to have the third highest percentage of people over the age of 65 in the nation, according to The State of Aging in Montana 2006.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) will play a lead role in older worker initiatives and in the development and implementation of Montana's strategies to address the issues of older workers. The SCSEP provides employment services to adults age 55 and older who: 1) have an income below 125% of the federal poverty level, 2) are unemployed, 3) are residents of the state of Montana, and 4) have poor employment prospects. The employment services include comprehensive training, case management, and a part-time community service training assignment. The goal of the program is to transition participants into unsubsidized employment earning a self-sufficient wage. This includes opening doors for former prisoners as well as for others who are seeking employment.

Section 2. Involvement of Organizations and Individuals. As required in Section 503(a)(2) of the 2006 OAA Amendments the following is a list of the organizations and groups of individuals that will contribute to the development of the SCSEP State Plan for 2008-11.

The Montana Senior Employment Services Coordination Plan was developed through the combined input of representatives from the following SCSEP grantees and members of the Aging and Workforce Systems in the state:

- Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS)
- Experience Works, Inc.
- Montana's Job Service Workforce Centers

The plan was made available for the following groups to become involved in providing review

and comments to improve services for older workers:

- Area Agencies on Aging
- Community-based organizations serving older individuals
- Business organizations
- Labor organizations
- Other interested organizations and individuals, including SCSEP participants

Input was requested in the development of the Plan through the use of telephone calls and e-mailing draft copies for review and comment. The following agencies were provided the opportunity to make recommendations in the development of this Plan and provide a summary of the services they offer to the senior population:

a. Experience Works, Inc.: The only SCSEP provider in Montana.

b. Other Organizations:

- Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services (DPHHS)
- Area Agencies on Aging
- State Workforce Investment Board
- MT Assoc. of County Commissioners
- Montana Commissioner of Labor
- AFL/CIO
- HRDC Directors
- Rocky Mountain Development Council
- Job Service Workforce Centers
- Public and Private nonprofit agencies providing employment services (Helena Industries and WESTAFF)
- Communities-independent living centers plus state (SLIC), host agencies
- Senior Centers
- AARP
- Community Services Bureau, SLTC
- Working for Equality and Economic Liberation (WEEL)
- Veterans Services
- Department of Corrections-prerelease centers
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Services for the Blind
- American Indian Tribes
- Governor's Office of Indian Affairs

c. Access to the Senior Community Service Employment Program Plan:

Montana's SCSEP Plan for the period 2008-2011 will be posted on the Montana Department of Labor and Industry website at <http://wsd.dli.mt.gov>. Contact information for users encountering problems accessing the website is through e-mail at wsdwebmaster@mt.gov or by phone at (406) 444-4100. The SCSEP Plan is final and there will be no changes made to

the original Plan once it has been submitted to ETA and posted on the website.

Further access to the Montana SCSEP Plan will be provided through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services/Aging Services website at <http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/index.shtml>.

Section 3. Solicitation and Collection of Public Comments.

The draft State Plan was shared with several providers of services for seniors and the general public. Comments were shared in telephone conversations and through regular contact with agencies in the course of doing business. On April 25, 2008, several agency representatives, ([*see attachment 1*](#)) participated in a meeting in Helena to provide input on the Plan.

Section 4. Basic Distribution of SCSEP Positions within the State

a. Location of Positions

There are 294 authorized national positions and 76 authorized state positions in Montana. Note: For Program Year 2007-2008, the SCSEP provider had 273 modified national positions and 71 modified state positions, due to the higher minimum wage. Four coordinators cover Montana. The current enrollment of participants covers all 56 counties in the state. With a mission to strengthen families, communities and our nation by providing disadvantaged and older individuals with opportunities to learn, work and serve others, the SCSEP provider has broadened its service list to include a national recognition event of outstanding older workers and employers of older workers called the Prime Time Awards. The current state participants include 7% from minorities and 27% who have disabilities. The population served is 83% at or below the poverty level with 33% age 65 or older leaving the remaining 67% between 55 and 65 years of age. Since WIA, 7 participant Employment Training Assistants have office space in the Montana Job Service Workforce Centers where they serve as a partner in the recruitment, job placement and job search activities for Montanans.

There are no counties that are significantly over-served or under-served with a variance of 1 of their equitable share based on U. S. Census 2000 data. The SCSEP service provider uses the Census to determine equitable distribution. The population shifts each year cause some counties to be over-served and some to be under-served even though the authorized numbers for these counties meet the Census 2000 figures. There may need to be an adjustment in the numbers that differ from the Census 2000 figures in order to adequately serve these areas of the state. Thirteen Montana counties have both federal and state SCSEP services. All other counties have just federal SCSEP services. The State of Montana continually works toward the goal of equitable distribution of the SCSEP slots within the counties so that all people have access to services under the program.

The challenges that face Montana will continue to grow over the years as the work force continues to age as shown in the attached maps (Montana population age 65 and older). As young people leave, there is a ghosting of Montana, but there is also an untapped labor pool of older workers.

Those in attendance at the April 25th meeting asked that more slots be added to Montana's total in order to help more of the people who are struggling financially in Montana.

They also suggested the income guidelines be raised to serve more low-income seniors. The countable and excludable income for SCSEP eligibility should be evaluated to take more of the high cost of prescription drugs and other health-care costs into consideration.

Below is a chart of Montana Counties that are over or under served by SCSEP. (*See attachment 2*)

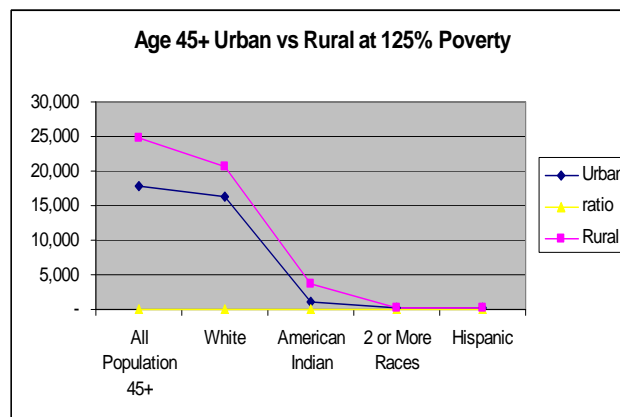
COUNTY	OVER ENROLLED	UNDER ENROLLED
Beaverhead	3	
Blaine	14	
Broadwater		2
Carbon		2
Carter	3	
Cascade		3
Chouteau		1
Custer	3	
Daniels		1
Dawson		5
Deer Lodge		2
Fergus		7
Flathead		18
Gallatin		6
Garfield		1
Glacier	31	
Granite	2	
Golden Valley		1
Jefferson		2
Judith Basin		1
Lake		10
Lewis and Clark		6
Liberty		2
Lincoln		5
Madison	1	
McCone		1
Meagher		1
Mineral		1
Missoula		8
Musselshell	2	
Park		4
Phillips		2
Pondera	4	
Powell		1
Ravalli		13
Richland		2
Roosevelt	1	
Rosebud		3

Sanders		5
Sheridan		2
Silver Bow		5
Stillwater		1
Sweet Grass		2
Teton		1
Toole		3
Treasure		1
Valley		3
Wheatland	3	
Wibaux		1
Yellowstone		21
TOTAL	67	156

b. Rural and Urban Populations.

Montana is a very large, rural state with significant barriers the SCSEP grantees have to confront on an on-going basis. There are shortages of quality host agencies that can provide the training matching to the employment goals for participants. There are shortages of employers that have a presence in the rural areas and are seeking new employees from the SCSEP population. The economy in some of the counties is depressed. Public transportation is non-existent in the rural areas. It is very difficult to recruit both eligible participants and develop host agencies due to distance, language, transportation, etc. The challenges in rural areas are ongoing. It usually takes more time to develop and monitor host agencies to assure that the SCSEP participant's training needs are met. This requires additional resources for staff time and travel.

According to Table 3 of the Division of Older Worker Programs Census 2000 data provided for these planning purposes, 42% of the total population of those 45 years of age and older at or below 125% of HHS Poverty Levels are considered Urban. Except for the Hispanic population, this same ratio holds true when a comparison is made by ethnic group. (See *Attachment 3*)



It is essential that both rural and urban areas are served equitably and that the older workers living in rural areas have access to training and employment resources that are equivalent to those living in urban areas. The challenge in addressing rural needs is the geographic vastness of the state and a dispersed and relatively small population. This results in the requirement of a high degree of inputs into these communities that result in disproportionate economies of scale. Potential solutions to rural community problems and decision-making are best resolved at the local level using small scale methods appropriate to the uniqueness of each community.

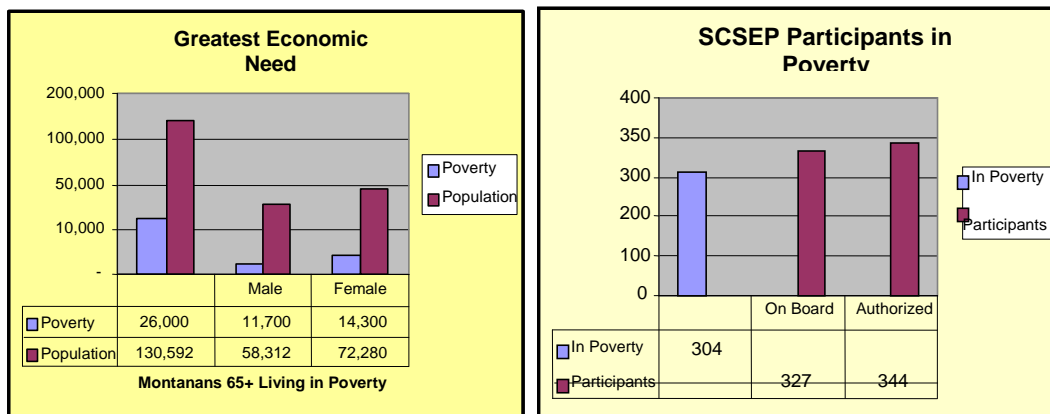
Action Plan: Identify the inequities in resources to equitably serve SCSEP participants in both rural and urban counties across the state. Identify those inequities specific to rural areas that can be changed or addressed and promote the development of new training sites and employment opportunities for participants by the end of December 2008 and ongoing thereafter. Identify tools and resources to rally communities to help with the needs of the eligible population.

c. Specific Population Groups

(1) Greatest economic need: *Those persons at or below the poverty level established by the Department of Health and Human Services and approved by the Office of Management and Budget.*

There are many older persons that need to work in order to pay for the necessities of life: food, housing, transportation and medical care. Social Security benefits alone cannot meet their needs and they must subsidize this with employment. The SCSEP grantees have found that a large number of the participants are working to pay for prescriptions or to cover the cost of health insurance. Of the current enrollment, 67% are below the age of 65 and may not receive any Social Security benefits (unless they have opted to draw their benefit at age 62 or receive Social Security Disability benefits.) Low income older workers want and need to work.

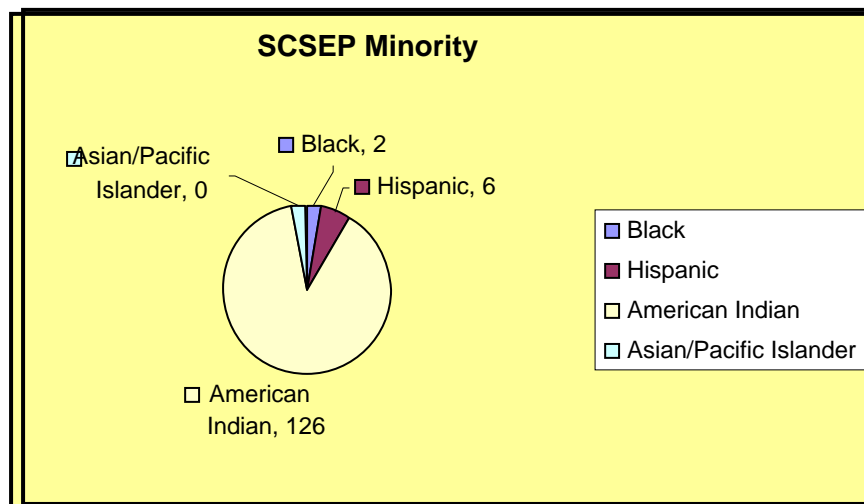
The number of older workers is growing in Montana along with the rest of the country. According to the US Department of Health and Human Services “A Profile of Older Americans: 2007, 65.9 percent of the 2008 population is more than 55 years old. The U. S. Census 2000 data indicates that Montana has a population that includes 130,592 people ages 65 and older. Of this population, 26,000 (21.7%) are the men and women that have an income that is at or below 125% of HHS poverty levels. Currently, SCSEP grantees in Montana have an enrollment of participants that include 93% living in poverty. (See Attachment 4)



According to the Current Population Survey (CPS), a joint effort of the U. S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 12.8% of the entire population in 2006 lived in poverty. (See Attachment 4)

(2) Minorities: *This includes American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino American, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.*

As of third quarter of the 2007-2008 grant year, the Montana SCSEP provider reports American Indians are the main minority population served at 34% of total enrollment. The total minority population within Montana's SCSEP program is 37% of total enrollment.



According to the May 8, 2008, Montana Department of Labor Minority Report, the SCSEP provider in PY 2006 served a higher percentage of American Indians than is represented in the state population, but fell short in the other minority categories. However, by looking at the third quarter numbers of PY 2008, it appears the SCSEP provider is making improvements.

Minorities, 55+, 125% of poverty	2006 MT Population	PY 2006 SCSEP participants	Third quarter PY 2008 SCSEP participants
Am. Indian/AK Native	0.5%	4.2%	34%
Black/African Am.	0.3%	0.0%	1%
Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0%
Hispanic/Latino	1.6%	1.1%	2%
Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.0%	0%

(3) Greatest social need: *This means needs caused by non-economic factors including persons with physical and mental disabilities; language barriers; and cultural, social or geographic isolation, including isolation brought about by racial or ethnic status.*

Recruitment of SCSEP Participants:

Recruitment of eligible participants in rural areas requires more innovative methods than in more urban areas due to the greater distances between participants, high transportation costs, and increased time needed to serve the participants. The SCSEP service provider in Montana links with the mature population in rural areas through newspaper advertisement; utilizing posters in high senior traffic areas; television and radio appearances; networking with senior citizen centers, aging organizations, disabilities advocacy and service groups, veteran's organizations, religious centers, city government officials, tribal leaders, and other community-based organizations. Job Service Workforce Centers help with recruitment. The SCSEP provider utilizes the One Stop system for outreach.

Many of the same techniques are used to recruit participants in urban areas, but with much reduced travel costs and with less time involved.

Currently anyone who is eligible and suitable for SCSEP in Montana is served. There is no one on a waiting list. The goal is to build a waiting list so the provider can continue to have a consistent number of active participants at all times.

Disability:

Aging often decreases people's ability to remain independent. The SCSEP service provider in Montana works with host agencies and employers to develop reasonable accommodations that will allow those with disabilities to work and be successful in the SCSEP training assignment or unsubsidized job following training. The SCSEP provider will continue to work with the Aging/Disability Resource Centers.

Front-line staff is provided training to sensitize them to the needs of those with disabilities. Recruitment methods are carefully worded so as not to discourage the older person with a disability from making application for SCSEP services. There have been many years of coordination between the Rehabilitation Services, State Services for the Blind, and Veterans services for referrals and providing of services to help the older Montanans succeed in the job market. The staff will also provide technical assistance to employers on ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements and available tax credits. The SCSEP provider will utilize the Navigator program out of Job Service Workforce Centers to help participants navigate the system. The Ticket-to-Work program will also be used.

Medicaid waivers are another venue for the SCSEP provider to explore. The waivers allow people to remain in their homes rather than live in an institution. Various services from respite to transportation and personal care are offered. The care giver can be paid if the care giver is not the legal guardian of the recipient. This could be especially beneficial on the Indian reservations.

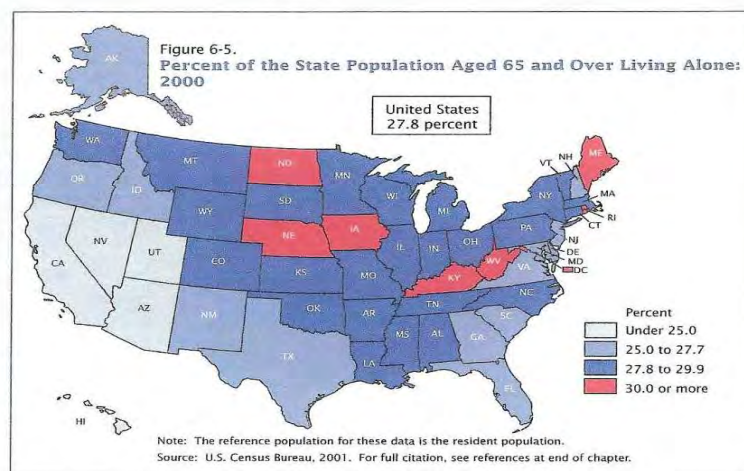
In 2005, people with disabilities made up 45.4% of the people 65 and older in Montana, according to the Montana Disability Data Table from the 2005 American Community Survey. The SCSEP service provider reports 26% of those currently enrolled have disabilities.

Homeless: The homeless community is always in need. The SCSEP provider is prepared to help this most in need population. Montana coordinates with housing authorities, human services organizations, county community action programs, and county social services. Through these programs the service provider is able to help with first month's rent, child care, utilities deposits, transportation, health and dental assistance along with employment assistance.

Isolation:

There are many forms of isolation especially prevalent in a very rural, low populated state like Montana. The physical isolation factor is the easiest to determine. As a rural state Montana has 6.2 people per square mile compared to 79.6 for the USA. More than 1 in 3 Montanans (35.4%) live in a rural county, making Montana the most rural state in the nation, according to Montana's Research and Analysis Bureau.

Montana also has a high rate of people age 65 and older living in a one-person household 29.8%. (*See Attachments 5 & 6*)



Language:

Language spoken at home among the population of age 5 and older on Table DP-2 Census 2000 data for Montana shows only 1.5% unable to speak English less than “very well.” (*Attachment 3*) The SCSEP Service Provider works with this population to get it into English as a second language classes.

Section 5. Supporting Employment Opportunities for Participants.

Unemployment is at 3.6% as of March 2008, according to the Montana Department of Labor Research and Analysis Data. The total work force is 504,771 with 486,741 employed and 18,030 unemployed.

The 2007 Labor Day Report mentions older workers as a source to help alleviate the work force shortage. “Given that the percentage in the population that is employed has increased, but the demand for workers has not been met, new sources of labor within the state need to be identified. Older workers may be one potential source. Data shows that workers over age 55 participate at lower rates. Businesses might help solve their work force shortages by attracting more of these workers.”

Wholesale/retail trade, transportation, utilities; government and public schools; health care and private education; leisure and hospitality employ the largest sectors of the population. Montana’s economic boom continued to spread in 2006 with all major sectors participating, according to Paul Polzin, Bureau of Business and Economic Research University of Montana-Missoula. Polzin mentions growth in manufacturing, nonresident travel, agriculture, mining and the federal government. Although reports on the 2007 economy are still being compiled, it is the consensus of those at the April meeting that Montana’s economy continued to grow in 2007, but at a slower pace than 2006.

Customer service and computer training are two important training areas that are useful for most of the largest Montana employers. There continues to be a need for technology-skilled workers nationwide as well as in Montana. Job churning is most affected by technology because of the higher wages paid in that field. The former receptionist positions that required skills in handling a phone system, filing, and typing generally no longer exist. The new receptionist positions require data input on computer, word processing, complicated telephone systems, and “filing” on computer. Even many of the cash registers are “mini-computers” with inventory control, pricing, etc. built in. The fastest growing users of e-mail in the nation are the 65 and older population. Use of e-mail and the Internet for hobbies and fun can translate into the use of computers for employment for these older Montanans. The knowledge and skill in using software for computer systems (word processing, spreadsheet, and communications) is vital for many older workers to compete and be successful in Montana’s job market.

Health care is an area where there continues to be a need. Nursing and residential care providers, hospital workers, and ambulatory health care providers in particular are in demand. The continued need for Certified Nurses Aides (CNAs) is recognized by the SCSEP service provider. They assess each potential applicant for their interest and current skill level. Those that indicate an interest and limited skill level in doing the CNA work are further assessed on their physical ability to perform the job with additional training. As is often the case, physical limitations of those age 55 and older are the biggest barrier in filling these positions. Being certified gives the person an advantage in getting the job interview and a better chance of being hired.

At the April Plan meeting, the shortage of home care workers was stressed and it was mentioned that workers are coming from the Philippines and Haiti to fill the need. Meeting participants also mentioned that some employers will pay for CNA training.

Section 6. Increasing Participant Placement in Unsubsidized Employment and Employer Outreach.

Rural often equals limited opportunities. The lack of transportation services in Montana often means few employers and job vacancies. The rural eligible candidates for SCSEP service tend to

be older, poorer, have more health problems, and lower levels of education than those living in urban areas.

SCSEP participants aged 55 to 62 generally need to work to survive. Their earnings pay for food, shelter, heat, transportation, and medicine. Social Security earnings and pensions for those aged 62 and older also need to be supplemented with earnings from work to cover life's necessities. These SCSEP participants are separate from the older worker who wants to work to fill time and socialize.

The skills of the majority of SCSEP participants are often outdated and need to be upgraded to meet today's employment requirements. Qualities valued in the older worker such as work ethic and reliability are valued by most employers, but the need for specific skills in today's job market are crucial for success. Health issues such as back problems that limit standing or lifting require special training assignments. All these situations lead to training and retraining for SCSEP participants to help them become employable. An increasing number of SCSEP eligible participants are getting technology training from the very basic to advanced.

The SCSEP provider is using a new Job Ready assessment tool. It is a computer program that is used to assess SCSEP participants' job skills and aptitudes. It also matches the participants with job training and potential jobs in the area.

With increasing unemployment in Montana, and the aging of the work force, it is becoming more important than ever to put older workers back to work and retain the older employees that are already in the work force. Many of these people need to have their skills updated or need to learn new skills.

The SCSEP provider is also introducing new Teknimedia training that enables participants to learn computer skills. Employment and training coordinators (ETCs) have a designated laptop computer which they work one-on-one with participants using the Teknimedia program. This is particularly beneficial in rural areas where computer classes are not easily accessible. The laptop makes the program portable. It can easily be taken from area to area, taking computer class to the participant rather than requiring the participant to travel several miles to computer class.

The SCSEP provider recognizes the need to educate employers on the changes occurring in the work force. Older workers can help alleviate the shrinking numbers of workers along with halting the brain drain that occurs when large numbers of older workers exit the work force at one time.

The SCSEP provider understands older workers and is passing that information on to employers. In order to keep a healthy work force, employers will need to make adjustments. Many older workers want or need to continue working past traditional retirement age. But many also do not want to continue working at the same level or hours they have been. Employers need to consider part-time positions, job sharing. The trade-off is reliable, well-trained workers who may not require benefits who are also good mentors.

Certified Nursing Assistant training is helping fill various positions in the healthcare industry.

Certifying truck drivers is an area the SCSEP service provider is exploring. Some SCSEP participants are willing and able to drive trucks, especially doing daily runs.

Other areas where training is leading to unsubsidized employment include janitorial, teachers' aides, kitchen help, park maintenance, receptionists, cashiers.

Working with Job Service Workforce Centers, economic development agencies, educational institutions and using online tools such as O*Net and Local Employment Dynamics, staff of the SCSEP service provider is able to identify jobs with growth potential.

In reviewing the jobs that have the largest number of openings annually and that require only short-term on-the-job training, jobs that stand out due to the number of annual openings are:

Occupation	2004	2014
• Retail Salesperson	19,514	22,857
• Child Care Workers	16,312	20,978
• Cashiers	11,829	13,965
• Waiters/Waitresses	8,845	10,068
• Janitors/Cleaners	9,632	11,282
• Landscaping/Grounds keeping	7,345	9,145
• Nursing Aides/Orderlies/Attendants	6,060	7,704

For these occupations, the annual openings range from 244 to 1,044 a year. The projected rate of increase in openings in these same occupations ranges from 12% to 22%. There are 62 occupations listed for Montana with little skill training required and most of them could be done by SCSEP participants. Those listed above are prime occupations to explore due to the projected number of openings from now to the year 2014.

In this same chart, the median hourly wage for these 62 occupations ranges from \$21.92 for Postal Service mail carriers down to the lowest double digit wage of \$10.87 for truck drivers, light or delivery. The jobs with the most annual openings pay from \$7.28/hour for maids/housekeeping cleaners to \$9.35/hour for nursing aides. These jobs are projected to increase by 18% to 21% respectively.

There is increased effort on the part of the SCSEP service provider to gather input from the host agency supervisors, the participants themselves, community leaders, the business community, aging service providers, and local government officials on the job skill needs within their organizations and the types of job openings they see in their communities. This is being done in a variety of ways including networking at Chamber of Commerce events and other business organizations' functions. The information has enabled them to provide more meaningful training opportunities for the older worker and find appropriate matches for unsubsidized job placement with a higher degree of retention.

A new position (Business and Community Liaison for Development) has been added by the SCSEP service provider to coordinate outreach to local businesses and community organizations

in the region. The Business and Community Liaison will promote expansion of local resources, including developing business partnerships to access services. Another responsibility of this person is educating employers on mature workers issues including retention.

The SCSEP service provider continually works on retention of participants who have entered the workforce. The provider uses a case management style of tracking, checking in monthly. The purpose is to see how the job is going, if the older worker needs more services, or if the employer needs anything. The case management lasts a minimum of 13 months. This keeps a good relationship with the older worker and the employer.

Section 7. Community Service Needs.

Seniors with limited fixed income in good health and a willingness to work could benefit from doing community service, according to those who work with SCSEP. Specific senior populations that would benefit from community service work are those with time and energy, seniors over 65, ex-convicts, retired people especially farmers and ranchers, all age groups if capable of physical work, the unemployed and economically disadvantaged older persons.

Jim Jewart of Great Falls is an excellent example of how community service can be a springboard to unsubsidized employment.

Jim Jewart, 58, a SCSEP participant with a variety of skills, had been a fireman in the Navy, worked as a barber for 30 years, and had even gone back to school to become a medical coder. Unfortunately, once he obtained his coding certificate, he found that the market for the field was highly competitive. When Jim sought jobs, he was told he needed more experience. But he couldn't get that experience in the first place because he couldn't get hired due to his lack of experience!



At this point, Jim decided it was time to try a different avenue to employment. He looked to SCSEP. Through the enrollment and assessment process, Employment and Training Assistant Mary Rapp learned that Jim had a strong interest in art, but he had never thought he could pursue a career in it. Because he wasn't having any luck finding a medical coding position, Jim decided

to change directions entirely and give security a try. He was assigned to the CM Russell Museum for his temporary training assignment. It turned out to be a perfect match.

Jim caught on very quickly to the museum's security procedures and was thrilled to be able to spend time surrounded by the artwork. He also loved meeting the visitors that toured the museum. Dennis, Jim's supervisor at the museum, says he's thrilled with Jim's work, and that Jim "does a wonderful job, is a fantastic worker, and I could not ask for anyone better."

In May 2007, the museum hired Jim as a full-time security guard. The Senior Community Service Employment Program turned out to be just the bridge Jim needed to secure a job.

Local community service needs suggested included mentoring in schools, working in prisons, jobs in tourist areas, cleaning road ditches, providing office support services, making signs, serving as job developers, doing flower enhancements along streets or in parks, serving as advisors to local businesses, cleaning rest areas, providing after-school programs for children and providing day care, receptionist for nonprofits, gift-shop attendants, service attendants for food pantries, jobs at clothing give-away programs and doing yard work. A new need mentioned is the SCSEP service provider will start paying for background checks.

While unemployment for Montana as a whole in March 2008 was 3.6%, it is a different story on the Montana Indian Reservations. In 2006, Montana Department of Labor and Industry unemployment figures ranged from 4.7% on the Flathead Reservation to 16.4% on Rocky Boy's Reservation. This is according to Reservation Fliers found through www.ourfactsyourfuture.org

Indian Reservation Unemployment 2006

Blackfeet	11.7%
Crow	9.4%
Flathead	4.7%
Ft. Belknap	N/A
Ft. Peck	9.7%
N. Cheyenne	11.5%
Rocky Boy's	16.4%

Many of those who are employed continue to struggle because of low wages. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 2005 tribal members who were employed but were below poverty guidelines ranged from 9% of the Ft. Belknap Indian Community to 48% of the Blackfeet Tribe.

Employed, but below poverty level

Blackfeet Tribe	48%
Crow Tribe	27%
Flathead Tribe	38%
Ft. Belknap Community	9%
Ft. Peck Tribe	24%
N. Cheyenne Tribe	16%
Rocky Boy's Tribe	18%

While the median Montana household income in 2000 according to the U.S. Census was \$40,627, median household income on Montana Indian Reservations ranged from \$21,158 at Ft. Belknap to \$27,424 at Flathead. Median family income shows similar results: \$51,006 for Montana, \$22,429

at Rocky Boy's to \$33,210 at Flathead.

<u>Median Household income</u>	
Montana	\$40,627
Blackfeet	\$24,646
Crow	\$27,044
Flathead	\$27,424
Ft. Belknap	\$21,158
Ft. Peck	\$23,905
N. Cheyenne	\$23,679
Rocky Boy's	\$22,474
Little Shell Chippewa Tribe	\$24,318

<u>Median Family Income</u>	
Montana	\$51,006
Blackfeet	\$26,832
Crow	\$30,038
Flathead	\$33,210
Ft. Belknap	\$23,158
Ft. Peck	\$26,019
N. Cheyenne	\$24,534
Rocky Boy's	\$22,429
Little Shell Chippewa Tribe	\$25,735

Setting up community service projects in these counties brings much needed outside money into the communities and provides needed services to the Indian people.

Small towns are trying to survive in today's world where shrinking populations mean shrinking tax dollars, fewer school-age children, fewer buyers of goods and services. Here are examples of how these problems are impacting people in Montana. Nine schools in the Chester area had to consolidate into one. That means children travel from a 100 mile area to attend school. Many stores have closed in Big Sandy including the pharmacy. Big Sandy residents must travel 100 miles away to get their prescriptions. A rancher from Stanford drives 300 miles round trip everyday to work in Shelby.

The delivery of services in rural locations is more difficult due to the low population density and large distances between participants in each county. The more remote or economically depressed the county, the more barriers exist. The high transportation costs and increased time just to reach many rural participants has the effect of causing higher overall costs of providing services in those areas. Recruitment presents its own challenges in a rural area where multiple and creative public relations work must be done to reach those in need of the services. Most troubling is reaching those individuals who do not live in towns and may be the most in need. In portions of Montana, an individual would need to drive as far as 100 or more miles one way to access work, services or a Job Service Workforce Center. Rural areas also often have few and limited opportunities for community service assignments, training, and jobs. It was mentioned at the April 25th meeting that **it can take a fourth of a tank of gas just to get to a gas station to fill up**, if you live in places such as Ft. Shaw.

Most often, the community service requests are for clerks, janitors, cooks or teacher's aides in schools; clerical help (with some computer knowledge) for city, county, state and federal public agencies; cooks for nutrition sites; clerical assistants for small nonprofits (again with some computer skill); librarians in schools and towns; docents, historical researchers (again with some computer knowledge); custodians for museums in smaller communities; and maintenance workers for cities and towns and for park areas.

During the next plan year, the SCSEP grantee will continue to work with the Office of Senior Long Term Care/Aging Services, the Workforce system, groups that provide services to people with disabilities and veterans, and other interested agencies as well as the business community to determine the local community service project needs and the specific populations that will work on these projects.

Local community needs will be addressed in an ongoing manner. Utilization of a marketing and recruitment strategy will be organized early in each grant year to identify potential host agencies to meet the training needs that match job openings in the communities and match with participant's needs and interests in training to gain employment.

Section 8. Coordination with Other Programs, Initiatives and Entities.

The SCSEP service provider has made a significant effort to become a true partner with the Montana Job Service Workforce Centers. The grantee has a long history of partnership with the Workforce Services Division as well as Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Department of Public Health & Human Services, Senior Long Term Care/Aging Services, and the Department of Education/Technical Division of the University system. SCSEP participants are assigned to these agencies as office assistants, resource room attendants, and custodial workers. SCSEP participants that serve as field representatives are housed in the Montana Job Service Workforce Centers in Billings, Butte, Missoula, Helena, and Hamilton. The SCSEP service provider is planning more creative partnerships with groups that advocate and provide services for people with disabilities and veterans and partners to help with case management, jobs and training.

Section 9. Avoidance of Disruptions in Service.

The SCSEP service provider reviewed the U.S. Census figures and the county equitable distribution numbers. Because of minor population shifts the provider decided changes in services to counties with population changes could be handled through attrition.

Section 10. Improvement of SCSEP Services.

The overall goal of the SCSEP in Montana is to serve the eligible clientele by providing excellent training opportunities that both improve or build skill levels and provide the training needed for jobs available in the community. The long-term goal is to assure the job matching is appropriate for both the employer and older worker so that the relationship will be retained to the benefit of the employer, the older worker and the state's economy. Partnerships for integrating services are a key to these strategies. Attainment of negotiated goals for serving Montana's older worker population, increasing services within the network of nonprofits and public agencies within communities, and providing skilled workers for employers is a measure of successful service from the SCSEP service provider. Quarterly reviews of performance results will be performed with

assistance and training offered in areas needing improvement.

Recommendations include the following:

- Train SCSEP participants in computer skills and healthcare-related skills to better fill the employment needs in the state
- Work with nonprofit agencies for meaningful community service assignments that fill a current need within the community
- Work with businesses and nonprofit agencies to develop good training assignments where today's skills are learned on-the-job and unsubsidized employment will be the end result in more situations
- Assist the business community to find ways to attract and employ the older worker and show them why this is beneficial to them
- Continue to house SCSEP field personnel within the Montana One Stop Centers throughout the state
- Coordinate activities with the WIA administrators and Montana One Stop Centers
- Target services to Native Americans
- Work with the Job Service Workforce Center in Browning
- Expand Area Agencies on Aging referrals
- Place additional emphasis on creative partnerships with groups that advocate and provide services to people with disabilities and veterans
- Expand coordination with ADRC throughout the state
- Work with Montana Non-profit Agencies
- Expand relationships with Montana Chambers of Commerce
- CNA training that can lead to personal care jobs
- State Workforce Investment Board involvement

The bottom line is the SCSEP service provider is all about leveraging resources for a better quality of life for Montana participants. Various ways to partner with the SCSEP service provider to help older workers includes:

- AARP-pedometer program
- AARP-grandparents raising grandchildren, particularly helps American Indians
- Transportation Advisory Councils-Ticket to Work
- WIA adult program-supportive services
- Community Services-sharing job site information
- Area Agencies on Aging-job site information
- Department of Labor-help with performance measurements
- Job Service Workforce Centers-pre-testing
- Possible job opportunities at Area Agencies on Aging, Walgreens, and U.S. Census

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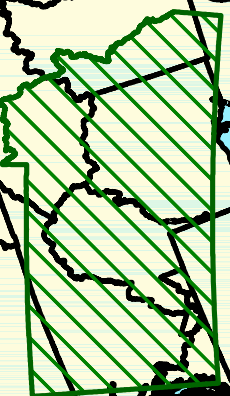
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Montana Area Comparison

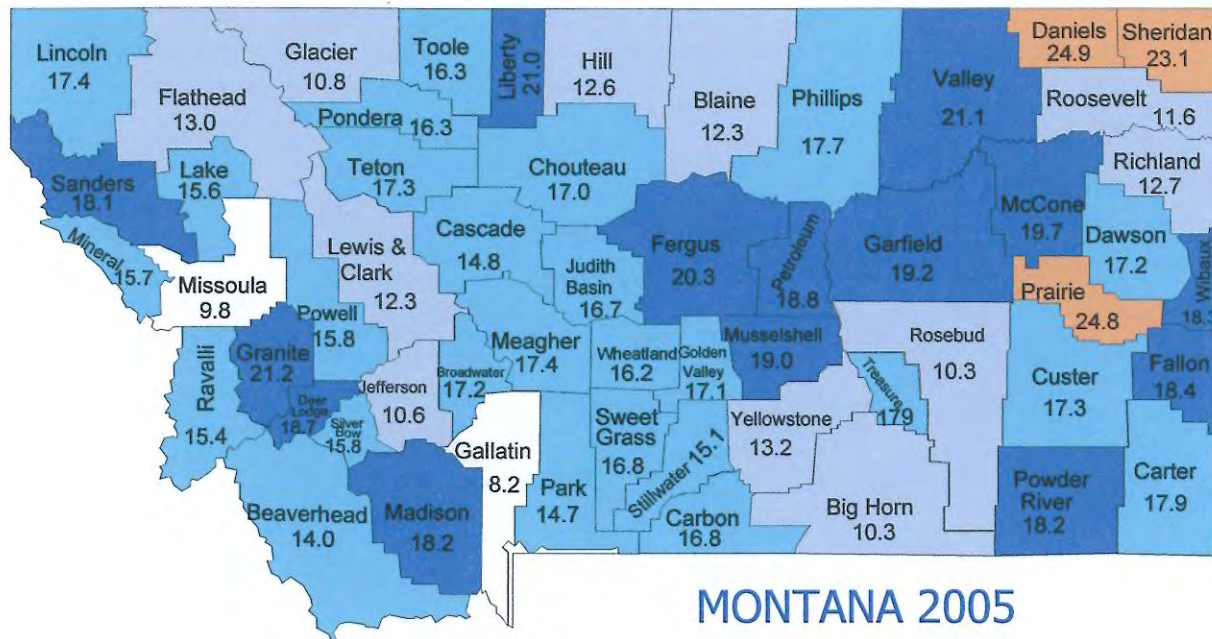
Montana Area: 147,029 Square Miles

Montana



Created by:
Montana Census & Economic Information Center
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1424 Ninth Ave., Helena, MT 59620-0505
406 444-4393 celc@state.mt.us
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PERCENTAGE OF 65 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER BY COUNTY



PERCENT OF
COUNTY
POPULATION 65+



6.9 to 9.9



10.0 to 13.9



14.0 to 17.9



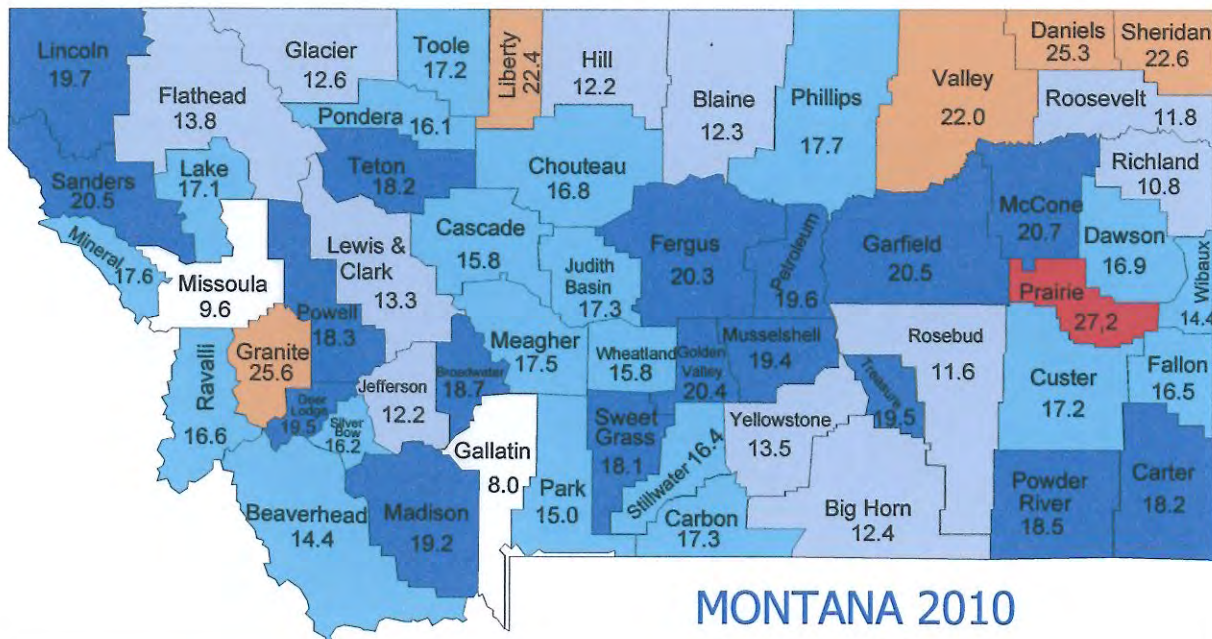
18.0 to 21.9



22.0 to 25.9



26 and over



PERCENT OF
COUNTY
POPULATION 65+



6.9 to 9.9



10.0 to 13.9



14.0 to 17.9



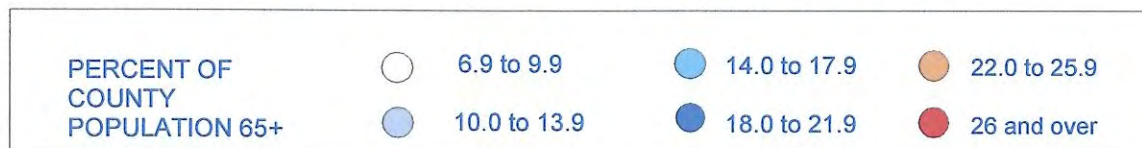
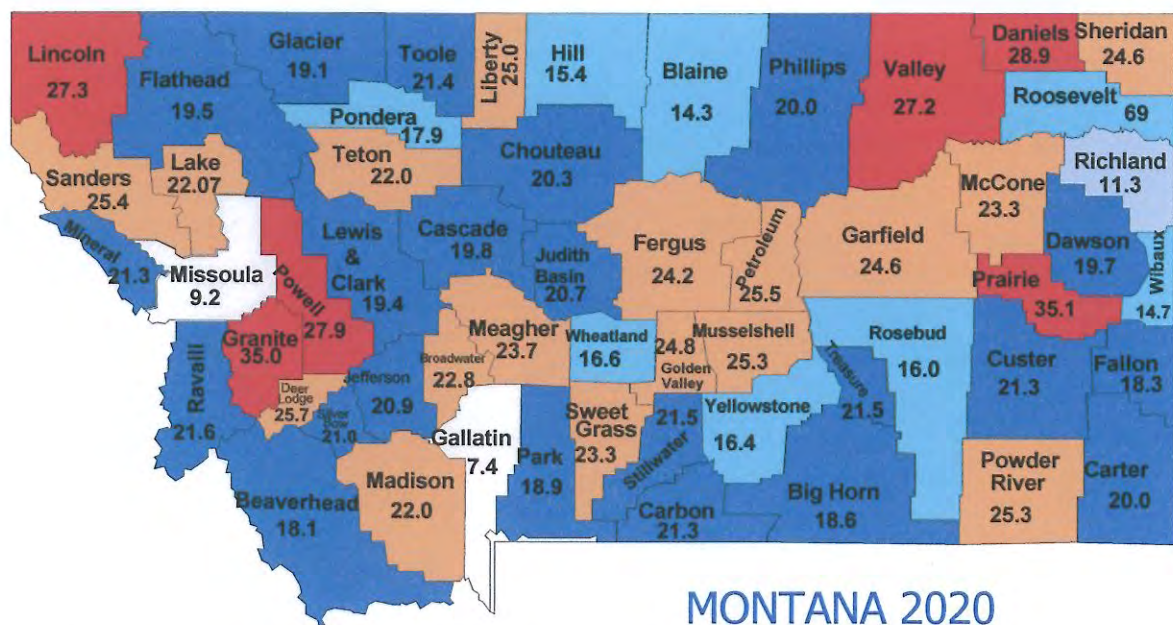
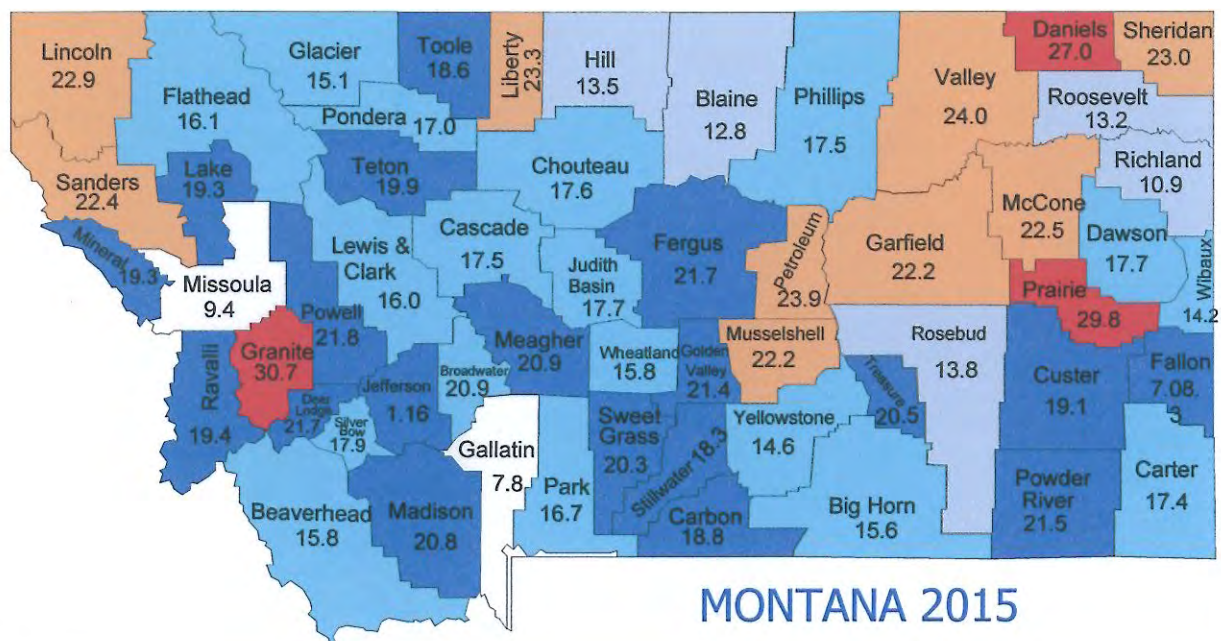
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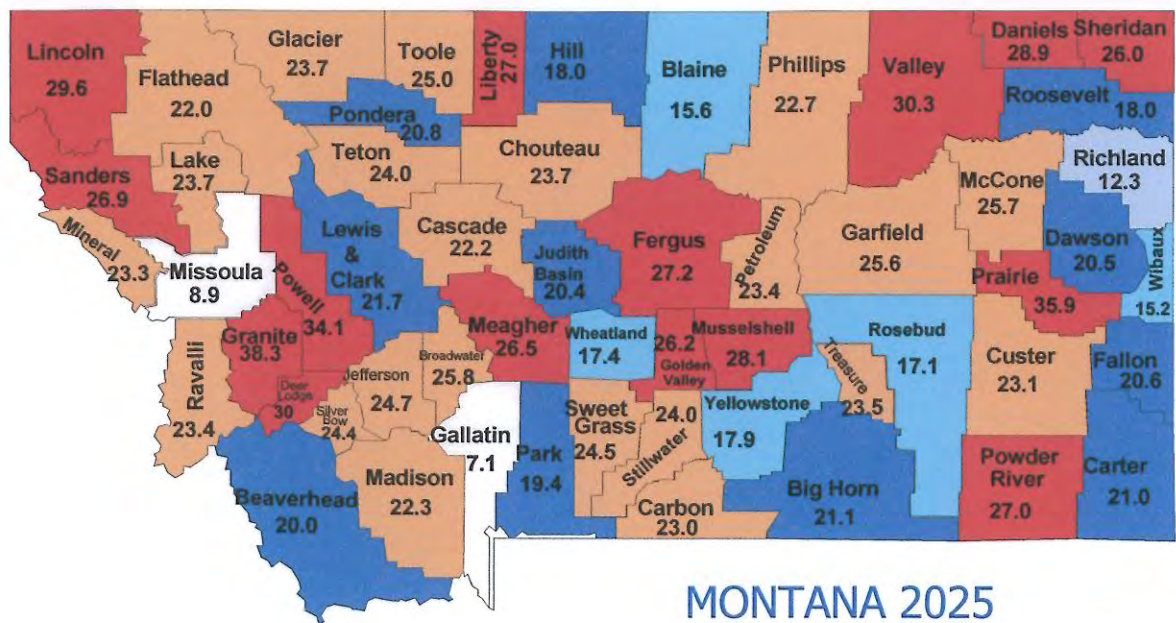


22.0 to 25.9



26 and over





PERCENT OF
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14.0 to 17.9



18.0 to 21.9



22.0 to 25.9



26 and over